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ABSTRACT

The question of whether graduates of Australia's technical and further education (TAFE) programs are getting what they want from training was examined. A market segmentation approach was used to analyze data from the 2001 Student Outcomes Survey (SOS). The market segments analyzed covered 93% of TAFE graduates surveyed in the 2001 SOS. The respondents' primary motivation for undertaking vocational education and training at a TAFE institute were as follows: career changer/reskiller, 22%; skill improver, 30%; labor market entrant, 12%; apprentice/trainee, 13%; self-employed, 4%; and learner in pursuit of further education, 19%. The percentages of students in each market segment who believed that they had achieved their main reason for undertaking TAFE were as follows: labor market entrants, 66%; career changers/reskillers, 61%; apprentices/trainees, 94%; learners in pursuit of further education, 91%; skill improvers, 86%; self-employed, 85%. Overall, 80% of graduates believed that they had wholly or partly achieved their main reason for enrolling in TAFE. The proportions of the various groups who enrolled in further study after their TAFE course were as follows: self-employed, 77%; apprentices/trainees, 51%; and learners in pursuit of further education, 78%. (Contains 15 tables/figures.) (MN)

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Statistics 2001

TAFE Graduates
Do they get what they want from training?

Australian Vocational Education and Training

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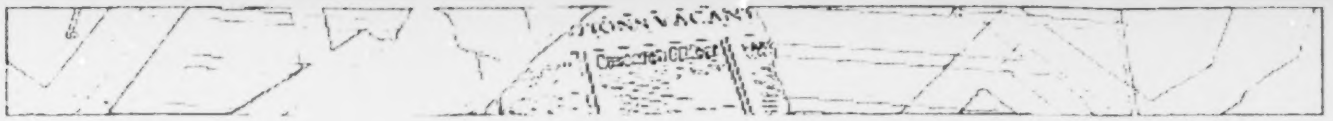

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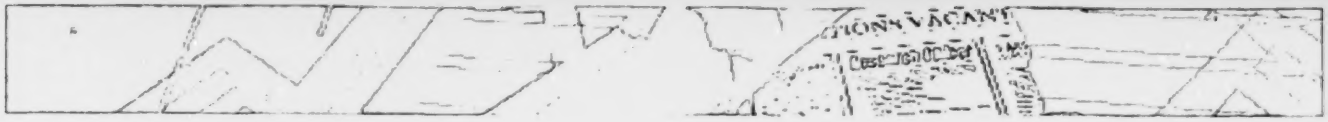

Foreword

TAFE Graduates: Do they get what they want from training?

Vocational education and training (VET) is an essential cornerstone in building Australia's future. In 2000, publicly funded VET providers delivered almost 350 million hours of VET to about 1.75 million students. A little more than three-quarters of these students (76%) undertook training at a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institute or through other government providers. The remaining 24% of students received training through community providers or other registered training organisations.

The Australian VET sector aims to equip students with skills that enhance their outcomes in terms of entering or re-entering the workforce, changing careers, or in upgrading skills for an existing job. The success of the VET sector in meeting these aims and in attracting students depends on its understanding of students and their motivation for undertaking VET.

This publication describes the results of a market segmentation approach that divides the TAFE graduate respondent population of the 2001 Student Outcomes Survey into a number of segments based on the students' motivation for undertaking VET. The results provide a novel insight into this particular group of students and can readily be applied by marketing practitioners at the TAFE institute level. The information provided gives marketing practitioners a valuable tool to understand and respond to training needs.

The segmentation approach used for this analysis is based on a method developed by the Western Australian Department of Training and Employment and described in Outcomes: Understanding the Vocational Education and Training Market (May 2001). The approach is complementary to a method used by the Australian National Training Authority in the development of the National VET Marketing Strategy, which aims to broadly address community attitudes and VET participation levels (May 2000).

It should be noted that the student market segmentation as presented below is only one way of dividing the respondent population of the 2001 Student Outcomes Survey and does not preclude any alternative methods. Anyone wishing to apply Student Outcomes Survey data in segmentation approaches for marketing or planning purposes should note that the data set allows a variety of alternative approaches.

Finally, I would like to gratefully acknowledge the assistance provided by the Western Australian Department of Training and Employment to NCVER in conducting this analysis and producing this publication.

Jessie Borthwick
Acting Managing Director

National Centre for Vocational Education Research
May 2002

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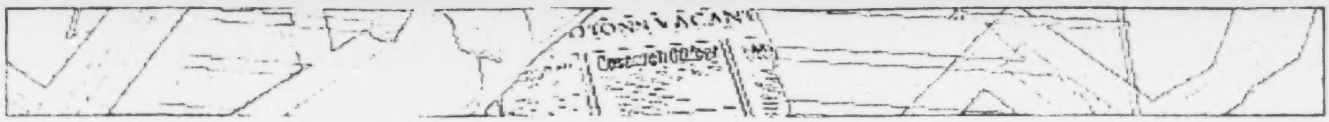
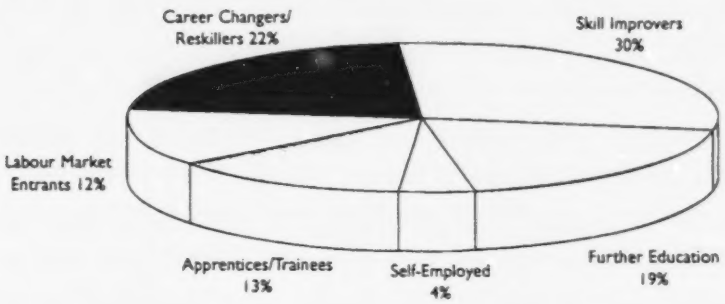


Introduction

People undertake VET for a wide variety of reasons. Their motivation is an important factor in choosing a VET provider, course, delivery mode, and whether to train full-time or part-time, on-site, on the job, or by distance education. The reasons people provide for taking up training appear to affect the outcomes gained from it, like qualifications obtained, skills gained, as well as employment and satisfaction. Segmenting the student market into clusters based the students' motivation for undertaking training can greatly facilitate the improvement of service delivery through VET providers. By focussing on client groups that share common needs providers will be better able to tailor marketing efforts and VET services.

The TAFE graduate respondent population of the 2001 Student Outcomes Survey (SOS) can be divided into a number of clusters based on the students' primary motivation for undertaking VET (Figure 1). The SOS is conducted annually in Australia targeting students in the publicly funded VET sector. It aims to gather information about students' general characteristics, course of study, employment outcomes and satisfaction. The described segmentation approach is particularly useful for marketing practitioners at the provider level. They can readily apply the results of this segmentation to develop strategies to better respond to and address students' needs.

Figure 1: Student market segments based on primary motivation for undertaking VET.



Note: The data for this market segmentation approach were collected from TAFE graduates in the 2001 Student Outcomes Survey

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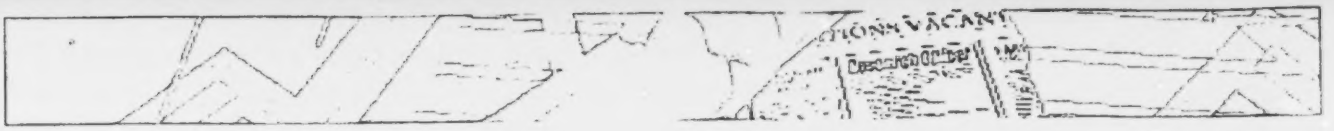


Caveats: Apprentices/Trainees segment

The reader is cautioned concerning information relating to the client segment of *Apprentices/Trainees* as set out below. This segment was defined solely based on data collected in the 2001 SOS. Respondents were classified as apprentice or trainee for the purpose of this publication when they stated that their main source of income during the course was an apprenticeship or traineeship. It is obvious that this approach has limitations and is likely to produce information about this group that is different from data that an analysis of the national apprentice and trainee collection may yield.

Apprentices and trainees are identified in the collection by their contract of training. This collection also includes those apprentices and trainees that do not undertake VET at TAFE. Likely differences in characteristics of apprentices and trainees as obtained through SOS data or information held in the apprentice and trainee collection do not indicate that information about the *Apprentices/Trainees* segment as set out below is incorrect. It merely reflects the difference in the base from which data were drawn.

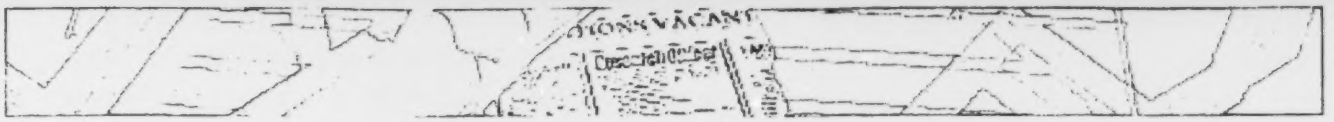
The data on *Apprentices/Trainees* throughout this publication can be more closely linked to "traditional" apprentices and trainees. Traditionally, these groups are predominantly made up of males, mostly under the age of 25, undertaking an AQF Certificate III or equivalent course, and work as tradesperson or related workers after their training. These characteristics are clearly shared by students in the *Apprentices/Trainees* segment as defined here. This segment is made up of 74% males, 86% of this group are under the age of 25, 76% gained an AQF Certificate III or equivalent, and 64% were working as tradespersons or related workers after finishing their training.

Definition of Student Market Segments

About 37,000 respondents to the 2001 SOS who represent a total population of approximately 120,000 TAFE graduates, were divided into six mutually exclusive clusters based on their motivation for undertaking VET. The students' motivation was deduced taking into account the main reason they provided for doing the course, their age, whether or not they received an apprenticeship or traineeship during their training, and whether or not they conducted their own business before commencing their training. The following paragraphs describe the six student market segments and outline the motives for undertaking VET that are common among students in each segment.

Labour Market Entrants

This group is defined as anyone under the age of 25 indicating that they undertook training at TAFE to "get a job or own business" or someone under the age of 19 stating that they did the TAFE course "to try for a different career". *Labour Market Entrants* are likely to seek skills for their first full-time job. Gaining a qualification and generic skills will probably be important aims of their training. For most *Labour Market Entrants* getting a job will be the prime motivating factor for undertaking training.



Career Changers/Re-Skillers

Career Changers/Re-Skillers are respondents aged 19 or over who indicated that their main reason for doing the course was "to try for a different career" or anybody aged 25 or over giving as main reason "to get a job or own business". This segment includes students who already had some working experience and now wished to change their career path. It also includes people who would like to re-enter the workforce after prolonged absence. Obtaining specific skills and fast, effective learning are likely to be important aspects that members of this group will seek in undertaking VET. Obtaining the job of choice through a change in occupation or industry of employment will be foremost in most students' minds when deciding to commence training.

Skill Improvers

This segment is made up of graduates who stated as the main reason for undertaking their course "to get a better job or promotion", "it was a requirement of my job", or "I wanted extra skills for my job". Students in this group are most likely to be employed but wish to keep abreast of developments in their occupational field. They are likely to seek specific skills rather than a qualification. This group is also likely to seek flexible learning arrangements, effective knowledge transfer and a part-time delivery mode. Their prime motivation for undertaking VET will be the desire to maintain or increase skill levels for their current job.

Self Employed

This segment comprises those graduates who conducted their own business before commencing VET at TAFE. Obtaining specific skills or keeping updated on new tools and techniques are likely to be important motivating factors for undertaking VET among students in this group. Conducting their own business either as sole trader or as employer means training occurs under strict time constraints. Students in this segment are very similar to those in the *Skill Improvers* segment. *Self-Employed* students are consequently likely to seek flexible, effective and short-term learning solutions with the main aim to maintain or increase skill levels for their current business activity.

Apprentices/Trainees

This segment comprises respondents who indicated as main source of income during the course an apprenticeship or traineeship. This group has a contract of training with their employer who provides much and sometimes all of their training in the workplace. Apprentices and trainees are likely to attend VET training in their working time. Apprenticeships usually have a term of 3 to 4 years while traineeships take approximately one year to complete. Apprentices and trainees are most likely interested in VET that effectively complements their work and provides them with a recognised qualification. This group is very similar to *Labour Market Entrants* concerning their age profile. It is therefore very likely that their primary motivation for undertaking VET will also be the desire to get a job.

Further Education

This group is defined as students who undertook their TAFE training "to get into another course of study" or "for interest or personal reasons". Further education students constitute a very broad segment in terms of their motivation for VET when compared with the other segments. Students are likely to undertake VET for a variety of reasons ranging from the desire to gain entry level qualifications for other TAFE or University courses to personal interest in particular subjects or skills. Gaining job-relevant competencies is probably not a major priority for this group of students.

Characterisation of Student Market Segments – Who are they?

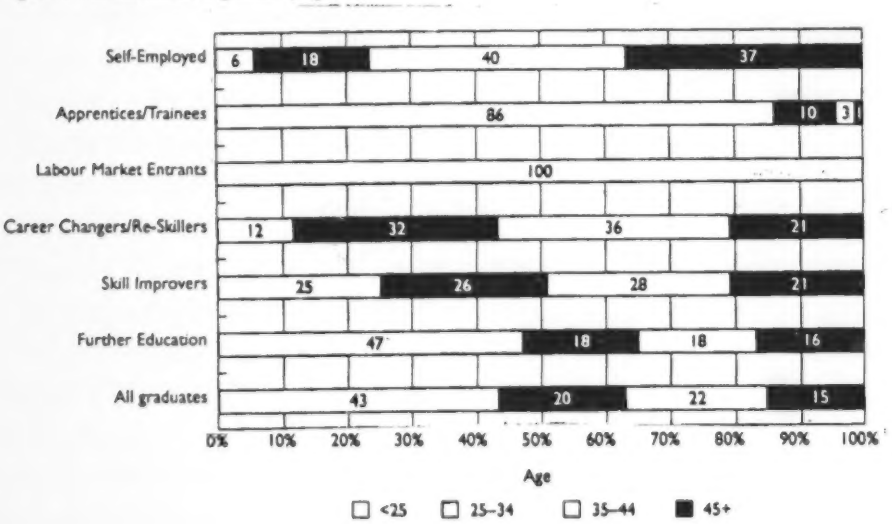
What is the age profile of the six student market segments?

The life stage of students is likely to significantly impact on their motivation for undertaking VET. Early in their working life students most likely will want to simply find employment and gain a recognised qualification. Later in life other factors such as getting the job of choice, career advancement, updating or upgrading specific skills, or changing careers will play a greater role in stimulating students to commence VET.

Figure 2 shows the age profile of students in the six market segments. *Labour Market Entrants* (median age: 20) fall by definition entirely into the under 25 year age bracket. *Apprentices/Trainees* (median age: 21) also contain a large proportion (86%) of young students under 25 making this group very similar to the former segment. It is worth noting that only 4% of *Apprentices/Trainees* graduates are over the age of 35. In contrast, more than three-quarters (77%) of *Self-Employed* students (median age: 41) are aged 35 and over. The majority (68%) of *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* (median age: 36) cover the middle years and are aged between 25 and 44 while 65% of students in the *Further Education* segment (median age: 26) are under 35 years of age.

It is important to note that students were included in the *Further Education* segment when they stated as their main reason for doing the TAFE course "to get into another course of study" and "for interest or personal reasons" (see also description of this segment in *Definition of Student Market Segments* above). Therefore, Further Education in this context does not equate to the concept of 'adult education'. Compared to the other five segments *Skill Improvers* (median age: 34) show a more even age distribution with approximately a quarter of students belonging to one of the four age groups as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Student market segments by age, 2001



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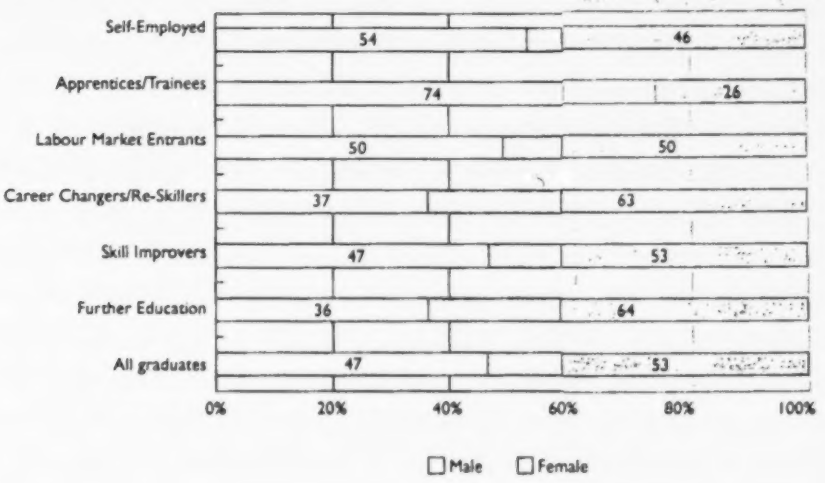
What is the gender distribution across the student market segments?

The gender of students does not appear to have the same impact on the motivation for undertaking VET as the student's age. However, it is nevertheless an important factor in people's career and life-style decisions. Almost two-thirds (63% and 64%, respectively) of *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* and *Further Education* students are female while about three-quarters (74%) of students in the *Apprentices/Trainees* segment are males (Figure 3). In contrast, *Labour Market Entrants*, the *Self-Employed* and *Skill-Improvers* show a more equal distribution of both genders.

Figure 3: Student market segments by gender, 2001



How are these segments distributed across States/Territories and capital cities/other regions?

The proportion of students across the six student market segments shows a State/Territory-specific variation, most likely reflecting regional economic, social or demographic differences in Australia (Figure 4). In addition, the size of the segments across the eight States and Territories may be affected by the specific training priorities in each jurisdiction.

The proportion of *Self-Employed* students appears to be effectively the same for each State or Territory. In contrast, the proportion of *Apprentices/Trainees* is relatively high in Tasmania (20%) and South Australia (18%), compared with 13% for Australia. Similarly, the proportion of *Labour Market Entrants* in the Northern Territory (3%) is the lowest for all States and Territories while the Australian Capital Territory (19%) and Western Australia (19%) show the highest proportion of students in this segment, compared with 12% for Australia. *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* show proportions that are about the same in all States and Territories while *Skill-Improvers* are particularly prevalent in the Northern Territory (46%), South Australia (39%), and Queensland (36%). Students in the *Further Education* segment are about 20% of the total TAFE graduate population in all States and Territories except for South Australia and Tasmania (11% and 9%, respectively).

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Figure 4: Student market segments by State or Territory, 2001

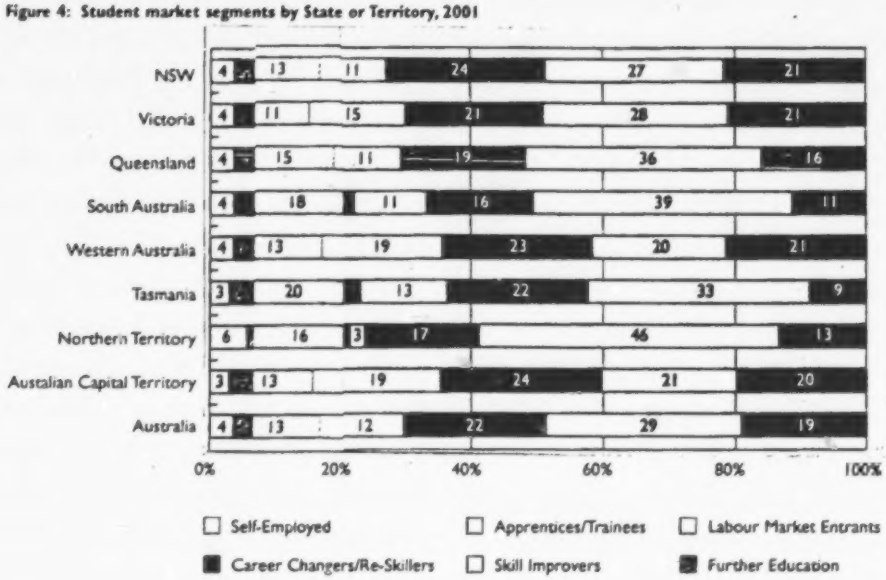
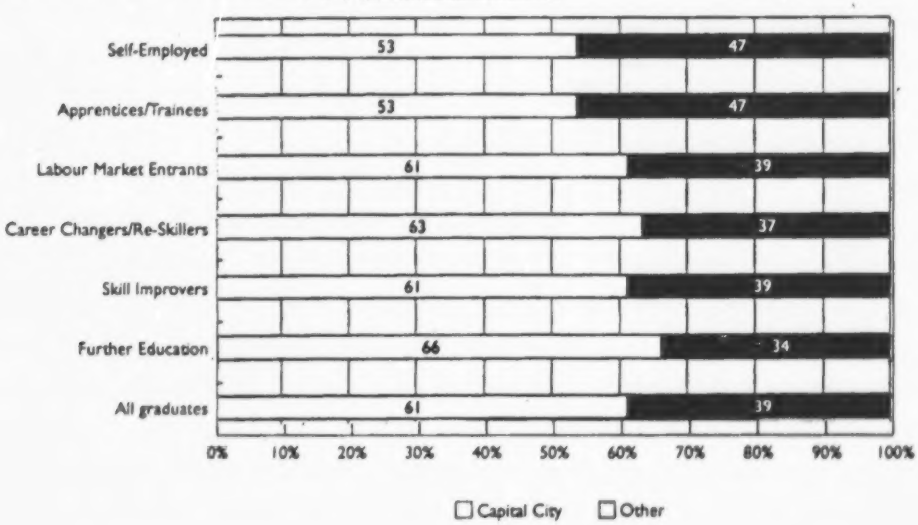


Figure 5 shows the proportion of students in the six market segments by whether they live in a capital city or other region of Australia. *Self-Employed* (47%) and *Apprentices/Trainees* graduates (47%) are slightly more prevalent in regions of Australia outside of capital cities compared to students from other segments (*Labour Market Entrants* 39%, *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* 37%, *Skill Improvers* 39%, *Further Education* 34%) and compared to all graduates (39%).

Figure 5: Student market segments by Capital City/Other Region, 2001



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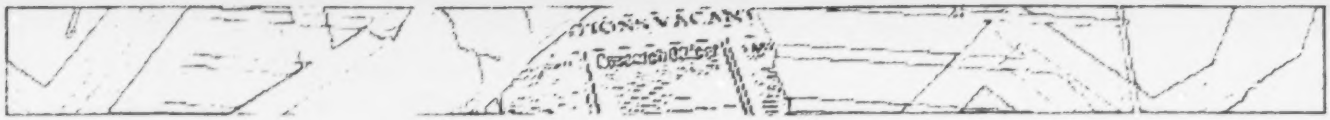

What courses do they do?

Across the 12 major fields of study, students in the market segments show considerable variation in the courses they study, echoing their particular VET needs (Table 1). For example, *Architecture & Building* and *Engineering & Surveying* are fields of study with a relatively high proportion of *Apprentices/Trainees* (42% and 40% respectively). This is not surprising as courses in these fields lead to trade and related occupations that traditionally have been a stronghold of the apprenticeship system.

Education, Veterinary Science & Animal Care, and *Health & Community Services* score particularly well with *Skill Improvers,* with 59%, 54%, and 42% of students in these fields of study belonging to this segment. *Education* includes courses such as workplace training, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders education, or volunteer tutoring in adult literacy and numeracy while *Veterinary Science & Animal Care* incorporates courses such as veterinary nursing or animal sciences.

The field of *Health & Community Services* comprises courses involving nursing, personal services as well as counselling, children's services, sports and recreation. *VET Multi-Field Education* as well as *Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences* are fields of study that show a particularly high proportion of *Further Education* students, 52% and 44%, respectively. *VET Multi-Field Education* field comprises preparatory, basic literacy and numeracy and other general courses designed to facilitate the successful integration of young people into the labour market, while *Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences* includes courses covering performing arts, social science, welfare studies, languages or communication.

It should be noted that students were included in the *Further Education* segment when they stated as their main reason for doing the TAFE course "to get into another course of study" and "for interest or personal reasons". In this respect it is interesting to notice that almost three-quarters (72%) of *Further Education* students who studied courses in the *Art, Humanities and Social Sciences* field gave as their main reason for doing the course "for interest or personal reasons". In contrast, 57% of *Further Education* students who studied courses in the *VET Multi-Field Education* field provided "to get into another course of study" as their main reason for undertaking the course and 43% said they did the course "for interest or personal reasons". These findings suggest that the field of *Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences* is particularly attractive to *Further Education* students seeking self-development while the *VET Multi-Field Education* field attracts about equal proportions of students seeking self-development and those aiming to pass a milestone on the way to further studies.

Table 1: Student market segments by field of study, 2001

Field of Study	Self-Employed	Apprentices/ Trainees	Labour Market Entrants	Career Changers/ Re-Skillers	Skill Improvers	Further Education	Total
Land and Marine Resources, Animal Husbandry	8	15	10	22	28	17	100
Architecture, Building	5	42	18	9	15	10	100
Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	4	1	13	25	13	44	100
Business, Administration, Economics	4	6	13	27	34	16	100
Education	7	2	2	18	59	12	100
Engineering, Surveying	3	40	12	8	28	9	100
Health, Community Services	4	5	8	22	42	19	100
Law, Legal Studies	2	1	16	25	42	14	100
Science	5	3	16	36	23	17	100
Veterinary Science, Animal Care	2	3	10	13	54	18	100
Services, Hospitality, Transportation	3	20	19	20	24	14	100
VET Multi-Field Education	2	1	7	27	11	52	100
All graduates	4	13	12	22	29	19	100

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What schooling and post-school qualifications do they have?

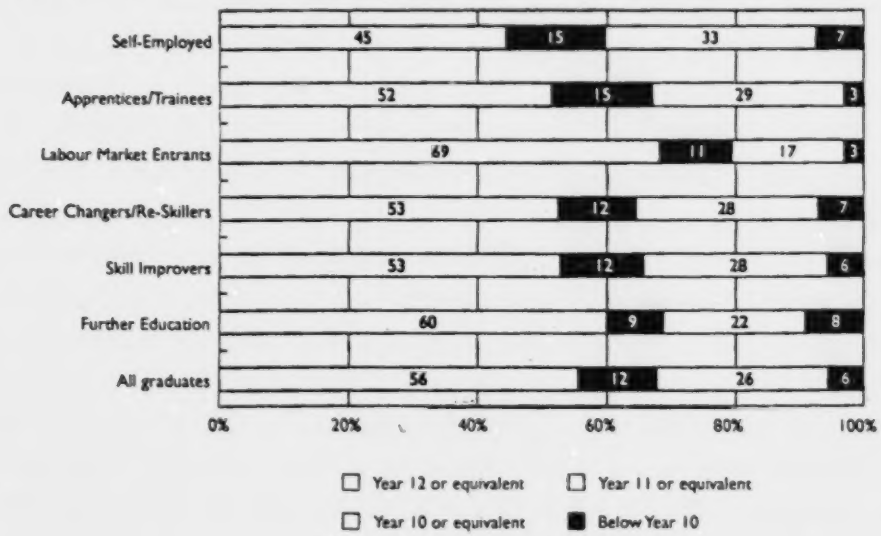
Students enter the VET market from different starting positions, ie. with different prior education and training, which will influence their choice of course, service provider or study mode. It may also impact on their motivation for taking up VET. For example, students with a Year 12 qualification in combination with other post-school qualifications are less likely to undertake training "to get a job or own business" than students who have no Year 12 and no other post-school qualifications.

Figure 6 shows the six student market segments by their highest secondary schooling before undertaking training at TAFE. *Labour Market Entrants* have the highest proportion of Year 12 school leavers (69%) while students in the *Self-Employed* segment show the lowest proportion of individuals (45%) having Year 12 or a similar qualification compared to the other segments.

However, when looking at qualifications obtained ***after*** completing secondary school and ***before*** undertaking a course at TAFE, *Self-Employed* students show the highest proportion (73%) of individuals who have gained post-school, pre-course qualifications compared to *Labour Market Entrants* and *Apprentices/Trainees* (Figure 7). Again this is not surprising given the age profile and stage of working life that students in these segments have reached. *Labour Market Entrants* are much younger (median age: 20 and 21, respectively) than students in the *Self-Employed* segment (median age: 41) of whom only 6% are under the age of 25. More than two-thirds (71%) of *Labour Market Entrants* and 60% of *Apprentices/Trainees* commenced their training at TAFE while still at school or within 12 months after leaving school compared to 3% for the *Self-Employed*. *Labour Market Entrants* and *Apprentices/Trainees* are thus much less likely to have obtained a post-school qualification in the short time between leaving school and commencing training at TAFE than *Self-Employed* students.

Career Changers/Re-Skillers (66%) and Skill Improvers (67%) are also very likely to have gained post-school qualifications before starting the training at TAFE. Only about half (48%) of *Further Education* students reported any post-school educational qualification.

Figure 6: Student market segments by highest pre-course secondary schooling, 2001



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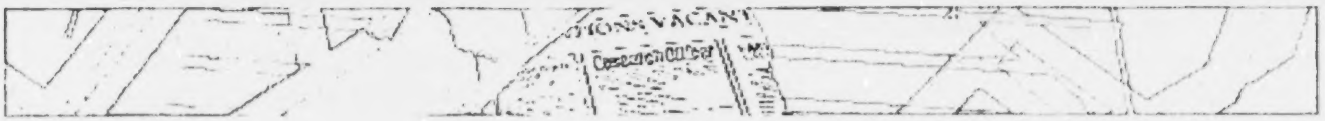
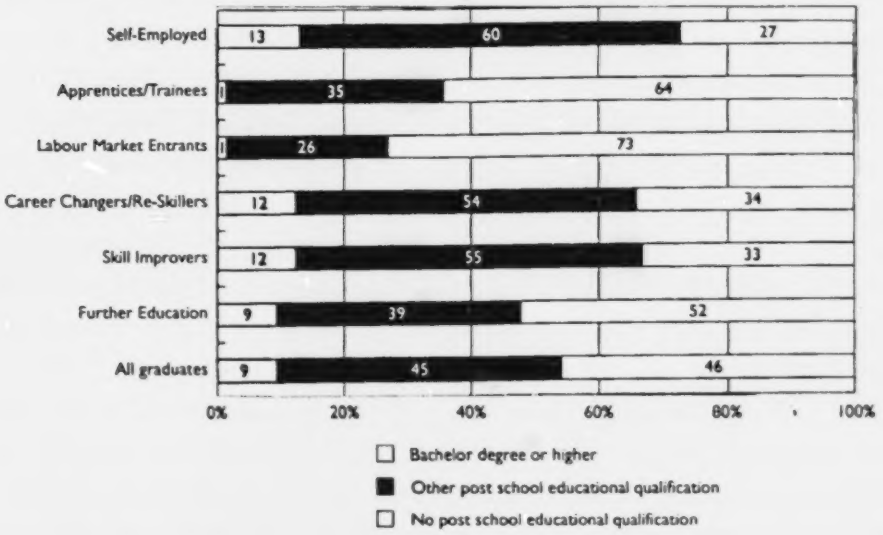


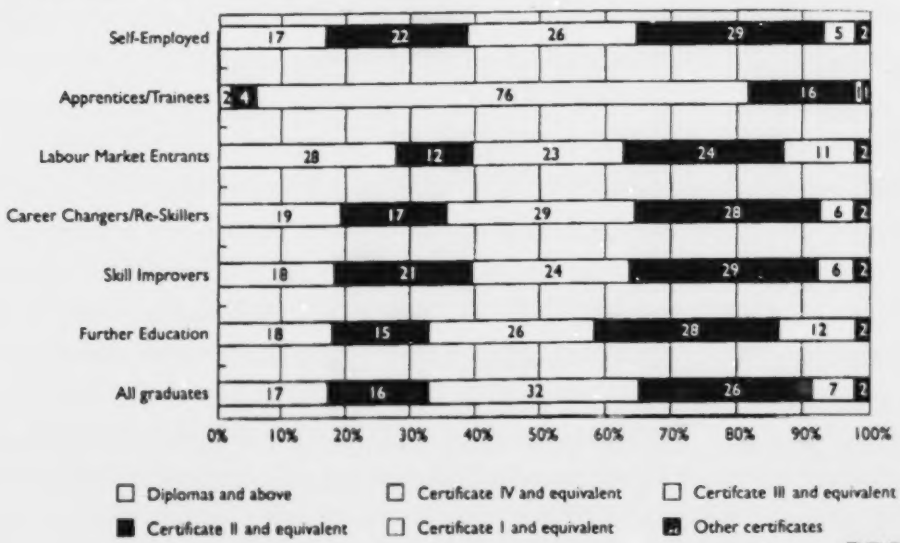
Figure 7: Student market segments by qualifications gained before undertaking a course at TAFE, 2001



What qualification did they gain through their course?

With the exception of *Apprentices/Trainees* and *Labour Market Entrants* there is little variation in the qualifications students gained through their TAFE course across the six market segments (Figure 8). *Labour Market Entrants* contained the largest proportion of individuals (28%) who obtained a Diploma or higher qualification through their TAFE course. This proportion was the lowest among *Apprentices/Trainees* (2%), more than three-quarters (76%) of whom, however, reported having obtained a Certificate III or equivalent. Compared to students in other segments *Apprentices/Trainees* were least likely to have gained a Certificate I or equivalent qualification through their course (1%). In contrast, *Labour Market Entrants* and *Further Education* students were most likely to have gained a Certificate I (11% and 12%, respectively) compared to 7% for all graduates.

Figure 8: Student market segments by qualification gained through TAFE course, 2001



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Outcomes and Success Measures

The six market segments were created based on the students' motivation for undertaking VET. Their motivation was deduced from several factors including the main reason they gave for undertaking their training, age, whether or not they received an apprenticeship or traineeship, as well as whether or not they conducted their own business before the course. How well were students in these segments able to address their motives by the training they undertook at TAFE?

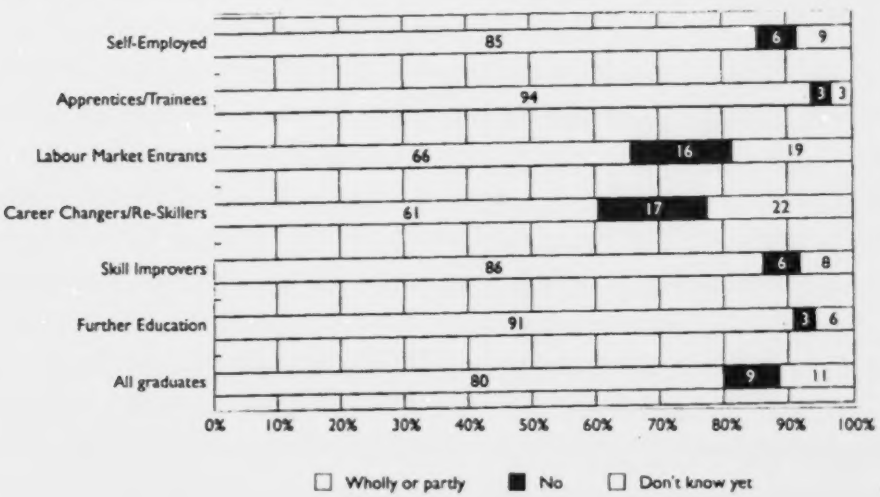
Did students indicate that they achieved their main reason for doing the course?

One measure of success is the students' self-perceived success. Figure 9 shows the proportions of students across the six market segments who indicated whether or not they wholly or partly achieved their main reason for undertaking their training. The figure also shows the proportions of those students who did not know at the time of the survey whether the course helped them to achieve their main reason for doing the training.

Labour Market Entrants and *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* were least likely to feel they had achieved their main reason for doing the course (66% and 61%, respectively). However, these segments also contain comparatively large proportions (19% and 22%, respectively) of students who did not know at the time the survey was conducted whether the training helped them to achieve their main goal. Getting a job and changing careers is a difficult endeavour and frequently requires a significant amount of time. Many students in these segments may have benefited from their VET training at TAFE some time after conclusion of the survey.

The overwhelming majority of *Apprentices/Trainees* (94%) and *Further Education* students (91%) indicated that they wholly or partly achieved the main reason for undertaking their TAFE course. Similarly, a large proportion of *Skill Improvers* (86%) and the *Self-Employed* (85%) reported having wholly or partly achieved their main reason for doing the course. Overall, eight in 10 graduates (80%) said they had wholly or partly achieved their main reason for undertaking VET at TAFE.

Figure 9: Student market segments by whether they achieved their main reason for undertaking VET at TAFE, 2001



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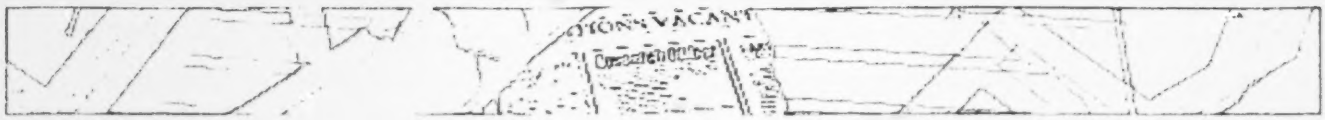

Did *Apprentices/Trainees* and *Labour Market Entrants* get a job?

A critical success measure for many students across the six market segments for undertaking VET will be an improvement in employment outcomes from before to after their training. Getting a job is the prime motive for most *Apprentices/Trainees* and *Labour Market Entrants* in undertaking training at TAFE. Table 2 shows that students in these segments improved their employment outcomes to a greater extent than students in the other segments. *Apprentices/Trainees* show an increase in the proportion of employed students by 18 percentage points from before (74%) to after their training (92%) accompanied by a decrease of 9 percentage points in the proportion of unemployed students (13% and 4%, respectively).

Table 2: Student market segments by employment status before and after their course at TAFE, 2001

Row %	Employed		Not employed*		Unemployed		Not in the labour force		Total**
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	
Apprentices/Trainees	74 ▲	92	26 ▼	8	13 ▼	4	8 ▼	4	100%
Labour Market Entrants	51 ▲	71	49 ▼	29	20 ◄►	18	19 ▼	11	100%
Career Changers/Re-Skillers	50 ▲	59	50 ▼	41	25 ▼	22	18 ◄►	19	100%
Skill Improvers	90 ◄►	90	10 ◄►	10	5 ◄►	5	3 ◄►	5	100%
Further Education	50 ▲	54	50 ▼	46	13 ◄►	13	28 ▲	32	100%
All graduates	67 ▲	74	33 ▼	26	13 ◄►	12	14 ◄►	14	100%

*Includes those respondents who did not provide enough information to determine whether they were unemployed or not in the labour force.
**The "Before" and "After" categories sum up to 100% respectively.

Labour Market Entrants show a similar pattern. The proportion of employed students in this group increases by 20 percentage points (51% to 71%) from before to after the training with a decrease in students who are not in the labour force by 8 percentage points (19% to 11%). The proportion of *Labour Market Entrants* unemployed and looking for work remains virtually unchanged from six months before undertaking the TAFE course to after. This, however, does not mean that all *Labour Market Entrants* who were unemployed before their course were still unemployed after. Only 38% of *Labour Market Entrants* who were unemployed before their course were still unemployed after. Over half (51%) of students in this segment unemployed before were employed after and 10% had left the labour force. It should also be noted that 42% of *Labour Market Entrants* looking for work at 25 May 2001 were enrolled in further study.

The large increase in the proportion of employed students from before to after the course compared to other segments indicates that *Apprentices/Trainees* and *Labour Market Entrants* are very successful in meeting their main aim for undertaking VET at TAFE, ie. in getting a job. It is worth noting that more than half of the *Labour Market Entrants* (52%) and the same proportion of *Apprentices/Trainees* who were working at 25 May 2001 did so in their first full-time job, compared with 27% for all graduates.

Most *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* are motivated by a change in occupation or industry of employment for doing training at TAFE. In contrast, students in the *Further Education* segment undertook their TAFE training for non-vocational reasons, ie. "to get into another course of study" or for "interest or personal reasons". Both segments showed some change in employment outcomes from before to after their training but these were more moderate than those recorded for *Labour Market Entrants* and *Apprentices/Trainees*.

Career Changers/Re-Skillers and students in the *Further Education* segment show a comparatively small increase in the proportion of employed students of 9 and 4 percentage points, respectively, from before to after their training. The proportion of students in the *Further Education* segment who are not in the labour force, ie. not looking for work, increased by 4 percentage points from before to after the training. About two-thirds (60%) of those were enrolled in further study, suggesting that students in this segment were generally successful in entering other courses of study after their TAFE training.

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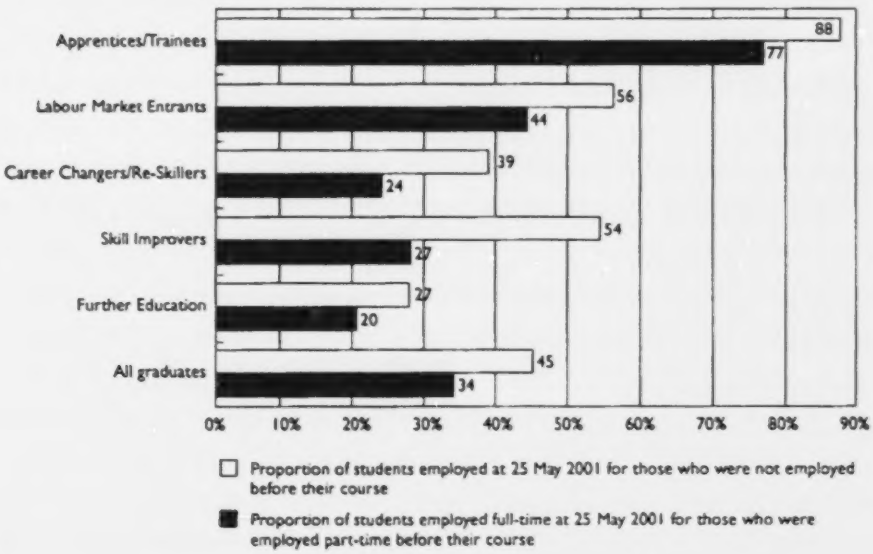
Most *Skill Improvers* are driven by the desire to further themselves in their current jobs and exhibited virtually no change in their employment outcomes from before to after the training. This segment shows the highest proportion of employed students six months before commencing their course (90%) and the second highest proportion of employed students after the course (90%) when compared to students in other segments. This finding is consistent with their profile and main motive for undertaking VET, ie. to gain skills for their current job (see also *Skill Improvers* in Definition of Student Market Segments). Their investment in their current job may be causal in their ability to maintain exceptionally good employment outcomes from before to after their training.

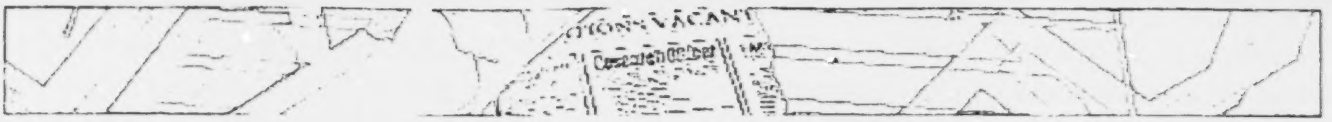
Figure 10 describes the change of employment status for students across the six market segments. In particular, the figure shows the proportions of students employed at 25 May 2001 for those who were not employed, ie. unemployed or not in the labour force, before their course. It also shows the proportion of students employed full-time at 25 May 2001 for those students who were employed part-time before their course.

Figure 10: Student market segments by change in employment status, 2001



Almost nine in ten (88%) *Apprentices/Trainees* who were unemployed or not in the labour force before their course had found employment at 25 May 2001. Similar good employment outcomes for those not employed before their course were recorded for *Labour Market Entrants* and *Skill Improvers*. About half of students in these segments not employed before their course were in employment at 25 May 2001, compared with 45% for all graduates. *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* and students in the *Further Education* segment who were not employed before undertaking a course at TAFE were less successful in improving their employment outcomes compared to students in other market segments. Only 39% and 27% of students in these groups not employed before the course had found employment after their course, respectively.

These findings show how successful *Apprentices/Trainees*, *Labour Market Entrants*, and *Skill Improvers* are in improving their employment status through VET. The findings are mirrored by the pattern of change for students who are employed part-time before their course and full-time after. Again, *Apprentices/Trainees* are best able to improve their employment status. About three-quarters (77%) of students in this group who were working part-time before their course were working full-time after. Similarly, 44% of *Labour Market Entrants* changed from part-time employment before their course to full-time employment after. About a quarter (24%, 27%, and 20%, respectively) of *Career Changers/Re-Skillers*, *Skill Improvers* and students in the *Further Education* segment reported a change from part-time to full-time employment from before to after their course.



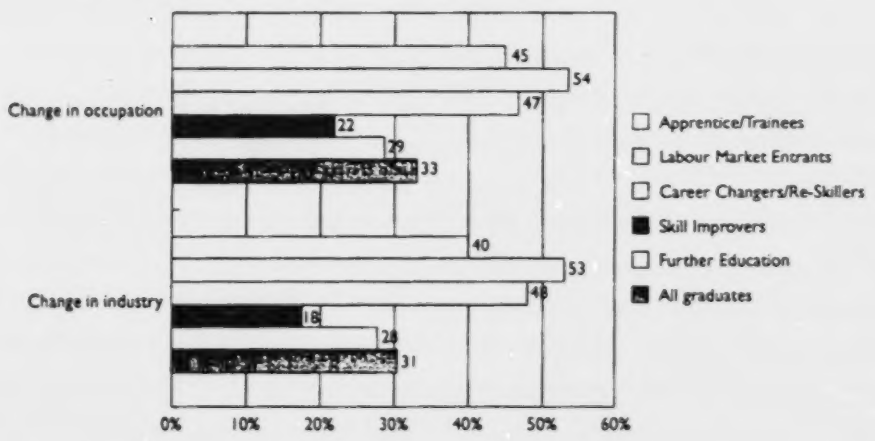
Did *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* change their occupation, industry of employment, or skill level?

While for *Apprentices/Trainees* and *Labour Market Entrants* "getting a job" is the prime motivating factor for undertaking VET, most *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* will aspire to a change in job or industry of employment. Similarly, the majority of *Skill Improvers* are driven by the wish to improve their skill levels in their current job. Are these students able to realise their aims? Figure 11 shows the proportion of students across the six market segments who were employed before and after their training and who changed their occupation or the industry of employment from before to after their training.

Labour Market Entrants (54%), *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* (47%) and *Apprentices/Trainees* (45%) were most likely to report a change in occupation from before to after their training at TAFE compared to other segments. Students in these three segments are also more likely to change the industry of employment compared to students in other segments (53%, 48% and 40% respectively). It should be noted that *Labour Market Entrants* and *Apprentices/Trainees* are very young (median age: 20 and 21, respectively) and slightly over half of students in these groups who were employed at 25 May 2001 were working in their first full-time job (both 52%). Eight in ten (80%) *Labour Market Entrants* and 41% of *Apprentices/Trainees* who were employed before their course were employed as casual employees. The picture that emerges is that of young people who start off their working life with casual jobs while they are at school and who aim to get their first permanent job or their job of choice through their training at TAFE. It could therefore be argued that *Labour Market Entrants* and *Apprentices/Trainees* are more likely to change occupation or the industry of employment compared to students in other segments merely based on the fact that they are in their very early years in the labour force.

In comparison, almost half (47%) of all *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* (median age 36) were working as casual employees before their course, and only 13% of them were employed in their first full-time job at 25 May 2001. These students seem to be made up of people who have been in the labour force for a number of years, who are likely to work on a contract basis, and who actively pursue a change in their occupation or industry of employment through their training at TAFE. Those with casual jobs may want to gain a permanent position or others may be seeking new challenges in their working life. Alternatively, students in this segment may want to change their lifestyle and are seeking to adjust their working conditions accordingly. The finding that *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* are about as likely as *Labour Market Entrants* and *Apprentices/Trainees* to realise a change in their occupation or industry of employment from before to after the training emphasises the success that these students have in achieving their goal.

Figure 11: Student market segments by whether clients changed occupation or industry from before to after their course, 2001



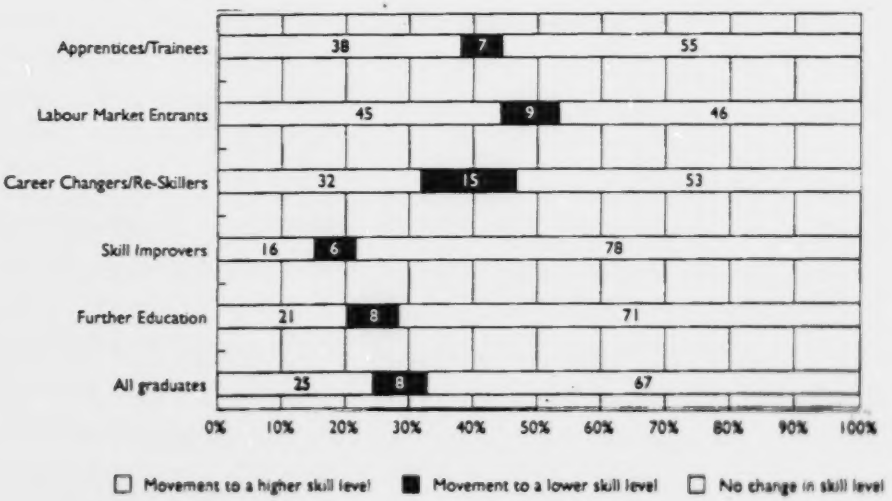
Skill Improvers and students in the Further Education segment show the lowest proportion of individuals reporting a change in occupation (22% and 29%, respectively) or industry of employment (18% and 28%, respectively) from before to after the course compared to other segments.

Surprisingly, *Skill Improvers*, most of whom aim to improve their skills for their current job, show the least movement to a higher skill level from before to after the course compared to students in other segments (Figure 12). Only 16% of *Skill Improvers* reported a movement to a higher skill level, while more than three-quarters (78%) of this group indicated that they experienced no change in skill level from before to after their course. For comparison, 25% and 67% of all TAFE graduates reported to have moved to a higher skill level and to not have changed their skill level, respectively. Updating and maintaining their skills in a changing working environment through training at TAFE may lead to job stability for *Skill Improvers* rather than to change in employment conditions. Accordingly, the success measure for these students should be the steadiness of their excellent employment outcomes rather than a change in employment parameters (see also Table 2).

Labour Market Entrants and *Apprentices/Trainees* were most likely to have moved to a higher skill level from before to after their TAFE training compared to students from other segments (45% and 38%, respectively, compared to 25% for all graduates). They are closely followed by *Career Changers/Re-Skillers*, of whom 32% reported to have moved to a higher skill level from before to after their training at TAFE. *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* were also most likely to have moved to a lower skill level (15%) when compared to students in other segments (8% for all graduates). This finding may be attributed to their success in realising that desired career change, since such change is frequently realised through a move "below level" to overcome barriers.

The *Further Education* segment shows the second highest proportion of students who did not report a change in skill level from before to after their course (71%). As most students in this segment do not have occupational motives for the training at TAFE it is not surprising that this group shows little change in their employment situation from before to after their training.

Figure 12: Student market segments by movements of skill level for those employed before and after their course, 2001



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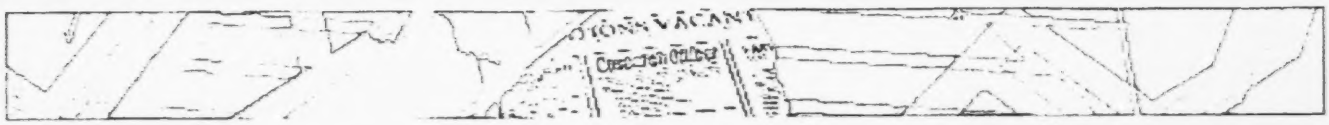

Did students in the *Further Education* segment go on to further study?

Students in the *Further Education* segment undertook their training at TAFE for non-vocational reasons: "to get into another course of study" and "for interest of personal reasons". It is difficult, if not impossible, to measure the success for those students in this segment who undertook their TAFE course "for interest or personal reasons". The latter will vary from individual to individual. However, it is possible to measure success for those students in the *Further Education* segment who said that they did their TAFE course to "get into another course of study".

Table 3 shows the proportion of students across the market segments who are enrolled in further study after their course at TAFE. It shows that students in the *Further Education* segment (53%) are more likely to have commenced further studies after their training compared to students in other segments. Selecting only the subset of *Further Education* students who did their TAFE training to"get into another course of study" this proportion increases to more than three-quarters (78%), further underlining their success in achieving their main training goal.

Table 3: Proportion of students enrolled in further study after their TAFE training, 2001

Student Market Segment	Enrolled in further study	Enrolled in further study (for those who said they did their course "to get into another course of study")
Self-Employed	35%	77%
Apprentices/Trainees	24%	51%
Labour Market Entrants	42%	N/A
Career Changers/Re-Skillers	41%	N/A
Skill Improvers	32%	N/A
Further Education	53%	78%
All graduates	39%	77%

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Technical Notes

The data for this segmentation analysis are derived from the 2001 Student Outcomes Survey. The segmentation approach is similar to a method developed by the Western Australian Department of Training and Employment. It is described in Outcomes: Understanding the Vocational Education and Training Market (May 2001). The segments cover 93% of TAFE graduates as surveyed in the 2001 SOS and are mutually exclusive. The segments were consecutively derived in the following order:

- If students indicated that they were self-employed before their TAFE training they were included in the *Self-Employed* segment.
- If students indicated their main source of income during the course an apprenticeship or traineeship and they did not indicate that they were conducting their own business before commencing their course they were included in the *Apprentices/Trainees* segment;
- Students under the age of 25 who indicated they did their course "to get a job (or own business)" and students under the age of 19 stating they undertook their course "to try for a different career", were included in the *Labour Market Entrants* segment, if they did not conduct their own business before the course or did not receive an apprenticeship or traineeship as their main source of income during the course;
- Students aged 25 or over who said they did their course "to get a job (or own business)" and students aged 19 or over stating they undertook their course "to try for a different career", were included in the *Career Changers/Re-Skillers* segment, if they did not conduct their own business before the course, did not receive an apprenticeship or traineeship as their main source of income during the course, or were not *Labour Market Entrants*;
- Respondents who indicated that they undertook their course "to get a better job or promotion", "it was a requirement of my job", or "I wanted extra skills for my job" were included in the *Skill Improvers* segment if they had not been included into one of the four previously derived segments.
- Students who stated they undertook their course at TAFE "to get into another course of study" or "for interest or personal reasons" were incorporated into the *Further Education* segment, if they had not yet been included in one of the other segments.

The 2001 Student Outcomes Survey was carried out on a stratified, randomly selected sample of students who graduated from a TAFE institute in 2000. The aim of the survey was to gather information about employment outcomes, satisfaction indicators and further education outcomes.

The proportions shown in this publication are based on stated responses. Since the survey was undertaken as a sample rather than a census the responses have been weighted to population benchmarks. The proportion for the category *All graduates* is derived on the basis of TAFE graduates that were included in the six student market segments.

When comparisons have been made throughout this publication they are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. Occupation and industry of employment were classified according to the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) and the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC), respectively.

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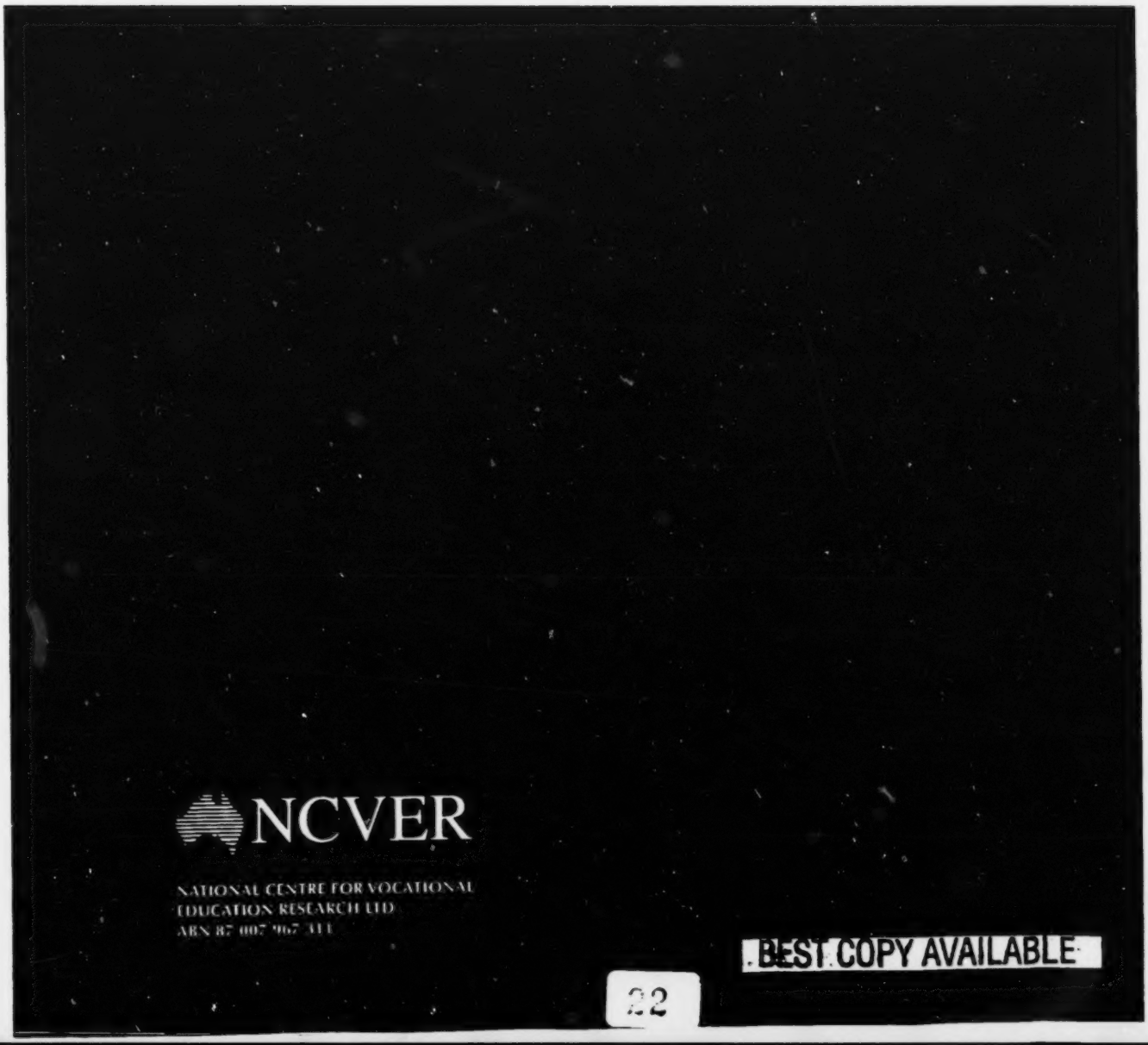

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